

Reducing The Risk IN THE GARAGE



SAFER ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

One of the best means of avoiding exposure to household hazardous materials is to use safer alternatives whenever possible.

Included in this section are time-honored recipes and suggestions to help you make the switch toward safer household products. Ingredients followed by instructions will guide you through an array of easy-to-make, easy-to-use safer alternatives. Some ingredients recommended as alternatives are safer, but not nontoxic.

The suggested alternatives that follow are only a sampling of available options and are borrowed from the references listed in the bibliography at the end of the section.

Making your own simple and effective products is fun and economical. We think you will be happily surprised with the results.

Aerosols

Aerosols contain an active ingredient and a liquid or gaseous propellant that is packed under at least 40 pounds of pressure per square inch. These pressurized aerosol containers are explosive and may be flammable. Depending upon other ingredients, the aerosol sprays may be irritants, corrosives, poisons or contain chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

Prevention. Use non-aerosol (pump-spray, roll-on or liquid) products.

Antifreeze (ethylene glycol)

Propylene glycol-based. Use Propylene Glycol-based antifreeze as it is significantly less toxic than Ethylene Glycol-based. Ask for it when you buy antifreeze.

Automobile Cleaning & Polishing

ALL-PURPOSE CLEANERS

Dishsoap. Use 2 tablespoons of a mild dishsoap or 1/4 cup of soap flakes plus 2 gallons of warm water to wash the vehicle. Use the same solution and a brush to scrub the tires.

Vinegar/lemon juice. For glass cleaning combine 2 tablespoons of white vinegar or lemon juice with 3 cups of water; store in a spray bottle and use as needed.

CHROME.

Vinegar. To clean chrome, wipe with a soft cloth dipped in undiluted white or cider vinegar.

Baby Oil. Apply baby oil with a soft cloth and polish to remove stains from chrome trim on faucets, kitchen appliances, vehicles, etc.

Newspaper. To make chrome fixtures shine brightly, rub

them with newspaper after they have been wet. Wear gloves to avoid getting newsprint on your hands and other surfaces.

Aluminum Foil. Rub chrome with aluminum foil, shiny side out.

Baking soda. To clean the chrome apply a paste of baking soda and water to the chrome surface with a sponge; let the paste set for a few minutes, then rinse and wipe dry with a soft cloth.

RUST SPOTS.

Steel wool. Use a soap filled steel wool pad to scrub the rust spots.

STAINLESS STEEL.

Olive Oil. Rub stainless steel sinks with olive oil to remove streaks.

Vinegar. To clean and polish stainless steel, simply moisten a cloth with undiluted white or cider vinegar and wipe clean. Can also be used to remove heat stains on stainless steel cutlery.

Club Soda. Remove streaks or heat stains from stainless steel by rubbing with club soda.

TAR.

Linseed oil. Soak tar spots with raw linseed oil. Allow to stand until soft. Then wipe with a soft cloth that has been dampened with the linseed oil.

Battery Corrosion

Baking soda and petroleum jelly. Use a baking soda and water paste to clean away corrosion, after reconnecting the clamps to the terminals, wipe them with petroleum jelly to prevent future corrosion.

Degreasers

Citrus/vegetable oil. Use citrus or vegetable oil based products with “Non-toxic”, “Biodegradable” and “Non-flammable” on the label. These are effective and much safer.

Kitty litter/cornmeal. For grease spots sprinkle kitty litter or cornmeal on the spot; after allowing it to sit for several hours, sweep up and dispose of in the garbage.

De-Icers

Salt alternative. Use sand, chicken grit or kitty litter (instead of salt) for traction on icy walkways or driveways.

Hand Cleaners

Prevention. Use nitrile or other type gloves suited for the activity.

Oils. Massage hands with a few drops of baby oil, margarine or butter, or petroleum jelly; wipe dry; wash with soap and water.

Non-toxic. Use a lanolin and glycerin-based, non-toxic hand cleaner.

Motor Oil

Recycle. If you change your own oil, recycle it. If you have it changed at a service station use a station that has the waste oil recycled.

Re-refined oil. Ask for re-refined oil. This will help improve the market for used oil, advance oil recycling efforts, help decrease the reliance on foreign suppliers and slow the rate of resource depletion.

Oil Spots On Garage Floor

Mineral spirits. To remove oil drippings from concrete: Soak the area with mineral spirits for 30 minutes and then scrub with a stiff brush as you add more mineral spirits. Immediately after the scrubbing, absorb the grease with oil towels or newspaper. Allow the concrete to dry, then wash the area with a solution of laundry detergent, 1 cup borax, and 1 gallon water.

Paint

Prevention. Determine the amount of paint you need for a job and purchase only that amount.

Alternative to oil-based paint. Use water based paint instead of oil-based paint; latex paints are free of the flammable and toxic solvents found in oil-based paints.

Alternative to water-based paint. Use whitewash (a combination of hydrated lime, water and salt which lacks heavy metal pigments, alkyd resins and other chemicals common in water-based paint) for fences, barns, basements and outbuildings. Use a dust mask when mixing.

Window & Glass Cleaner

A few tips on window washing: (1) never wash windows while the sun is shining on them because they dry too quickly and leave streaks; (2) when polishing windows, use up and down strokes on one side of the window, and side to side strokes on the other to tell which side requires extra polishing; and (3) to polish windows or mirrors to a sparkling shine, try a

natural linen towel or other soft cloth, a clean, damp chamois cloth, a squeegee, or crumpled newspaper. One word of warning about newspaper: while newspaper does leave glass lint-free with a dirt-resistant film, persons with sensitivities to fumes from newsprint may wish to avoid the use of newspaper as a cleaning tool.

ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER.

Paste. If the glass has a heavy buildup of dead bugs, combine 1/2 cup whiting (powdered chalk can be purchased at hardware and paint stores), 1/4 cup baking soda, 1 cup fuller's earth (powdered clay or kitty litter) and water to make a paste solution. Apply the paste solution to the glass with a sponge and polish with a dry lint-free cloth.

Vinegar. Wash windows or glass with a mixture of equal parts of white vinegar and warm water. Dry with a soft cloth. Leaves windows and glass streakless. To remove those stubborn hardwater sprinkler spots and streaks, use undiluted vinegar.

Borax or Washing Soda. Two tablespoons of borax or washing soda mixed into 3 cups water makes a good window cleaner. Apply to surface and wipe dry.

Cornstarch and Vinegar. Mix 3 tablespoons cornstarch and 1/2 cup white vinegar into 1-gallon warm water. Apply to surface and wipe dry.

Lemon Juice. Mix 1-tablespoon lemon juice in 1 quart water. Apply to surface and wipe dry.

Baking Soda. To clean cut glass, sprinkle baking soda on a damp rag and clean glass. Rinse with clean water and polish with a soft cloth.

Scratches, Stains & Discoloration In Windows & Glass

Toothpaste. Rub a little toothpaste into the scratch. Polish with a soft cloth.

Dry Mustard and Vinegar. Blend 3 parts dry mustard and 1 part white vinegar into a paste. Apply paste to discolored or stained portion of window or mirror and rub until the stain disappears. Rinse well with clean water. **AVOID EYE CONTACT; DRY MUSTARD CAN BE DAMAGING TO THE CORNEA.**

Windshield Wiper Fluid

Vinegar. When you have to leave your car outside overnight in the winter, mix 3 parts vinegar to 1 part water and coat the windows with this solution. This vinegar and water combination will keep windshields ice and frost-free.

Rubbing alcohol. Combine 1 quart rubbing alcohol, 2 tablespoons liquid detergent and 1-cup water. This formula will not freeze down to 35 degrees below zero.

For More Information Call:

- **1-360-397-6118 ext. 4016** *Clark County Solid Waste* provides information about household and business hazardous waste, waste reduction, recycling, composting and other solid waste issues.
- **1-360-696-8186** *Vancouver Solid Waste* provides information about waste reduction, recycling, composting and other solid waste issues.
- **Department of Ecology: 1-360-690-7171** *Vancouver Field Office* provides information on business generated waste and water quality issues.
- **1-360-407-6300** *24 Hour Emergency Spill Response* provides for the cleanup of chemical and hazardous waste spills and leaks.
- **1-800-633-7585** *Hazardous Substance Information Office* provides information about the proper disposal of business generated hazardous products/waste.
- **1-800-RECYCLE** *Recycle Hotline* provides information about recycling non-toxic products and the disposal of household hazardous waste products.

Additional Hazardous Material/Waste brochures are available from Clark County Department of Public Works. To obtain a copy of the following brochures call 397-6118 ext. 4352.

- *Household Hazardous Material – Product Labeling*
- *Household Hazardous Material – Purchasing, Storing and Disposing*
- *Household Hazardous Material – Household Safety: Preventive Measures and Protective Equipment*
- *Safer Alternatives: Reducing The Risk In The Garage*
- *Safer Alternatives: Reducing The Risk In The Home*
- *Safer Alternatives: Reducing The Risk In The Yard And Garden*
- *Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Program*
- *Get The Point: Be Safe With Your Used Syringes*
- *Clark County Recycling Directory*

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Although attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this booklet, Clark County Department of Public Works assumes no responsibility or liability for the effectiveness or results of procedures described in this publication and disclaims any injury or damage resulting from the use or effect of any product or information specified in this publication.



A cooperative effort of Clark County,
Vancouver, Camas, Washougal, Battle
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